

members of both the medical and osteopathic professions, and other informed persons in California, to make sure that the electorate understands clearly the issues involved.

All in all, the program at this point is moving smoothly toward completion. The remaining steps can be calculated and efforts made to put them into effect. There is every indication that these steps will be well planned, well executed and successful.

The degree of interest and knowledge displayed by members of the C.M.A. has been extremely high in this program. With these same attributes, coupled with some few additional months of work, the unification of medicine and osteopathy seems assured.

Another First

CALIFORNIANS have long accepted the spoofing inflicted by residents of other states over our proclivity to use the superlative when speaking of what we have, what we are and what we do. We have for many years bragged of our state as the finest, the most progressive, the most spectacular and as many another "most."

We have even learned to accept graciously the compliments that accuse us of harboring the most radicals, the most screwballs, the most far-fetched notions.

California recently gained another first place. It is now the largest state unit in the American Medical Association. While the trend toward this position has been evident for some years, the actual breakthrough comes as a pleasant item of information.

It is also a reminder that the larger the state association in the national assembly, the greater the responsibility.

Two decades ago California ranked fourth in membership among the constituent associations in the A.M.A. New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois had more membership and more representation in the A.M.A. House of Delegates.

Following World War II it became evident that "every physician who passed through California in a jeep wanted to come here as a practitioner." This trend has continued and has been magnified by the increasing number of physicians from other areas who have followed their fellow residents in moving here as a part of the largest in-migrant population surge the country has ever seen. The physician-population ratio of one to 750 has been maintained steadily in the face of half a million new residents annually.

The California delegation in the A.M.A. has reflected this increase. Two years ago the state achieved the statistical level of New York in the A.M.A. House of Delegates. It has now gone ahead to achieve first place in this numerical comparison.

During the growth period of the past 20 years, California's delegation to the A.M.A. has been aware of its increasing size and has carefully used its numerical strength to promote only those programs which are equally beneficial to the public and the profession.

Today it is even more important that the new position of numerical leadership be matched by moral and psychological standards of comparable size and strength. Should California use its size in terms of power rather than good, its influence in national medical affairs would suffer a prompt and well deserved downgrading.

It is comfortable to be big. It is pleasant to be good. It is incumbent that these qualities go together for the betterment of medical practice and the public health for all our people.